



International Student Programs Curricular Practical Training

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of employment authorization for students in undergraduate F-1 status who wish or need to engage in off-campus employment in their field of study when it is an integral component of their curriculum. CPT has a curricular purpose and is meant to further a student's academic studies; it is not employment for financial reasons.

- CPT is a benefit of the F-1 visa status, not a right.
- CPT at Messiah College is done in cooperation with the Career and Professional Development Center, unless your major requires the training experience. If your major does not require the training experience, you must register for an internship course through the Career and Professional Development Center in order to fulfill the curricular element of CPT.
- CPT is authorized for one semester; each semester requires a new CPT application (even if the employer remains the same).

Eligibility Requirements:

- Students must have been enrolled full-time for at least two consecutive semesters and be in F-1 status.
 - Students who have met the above requirement but are new to their degree program must also complete at least one semester in their curriculum at Messiah College.
 - CPT cannot delay or interfere with the student's progress in the degree program.
- Students must be in good standing with the college.
 - Students must be maintaining lawful F-1 status.
 - Students must be making normal progress towards completion of their degree program.
 - CPT will be revoked if:
 - The student does not maintain good academic standing throughout duration of the CPT authorization.
 - The student is placed in suspended, terminated, probation, or warning status.
 - The student is involved in any academic integrity or student conduct violation or any other action that results in the loss of good academic standing.
 - The student fails to maintain lawful F-1 status.
 - If any of these situations arise, it is the student's responsibility to end employment immediately and report to the Assistant Director of International Student Programs (Luiza Cliver, lcliver@messiah.edu) in the Intercultural Office.
- Academic English Program (AEP) students: AEP students in F-1 status are prohibited from participating in CPT, which includes unpaid internships, until they have completed the AEP program and then two additional consecutive full-time semesters of college credit courses. Most AEP students will become eligible for CPT after the completion of their second year of studies at Messiah College, unless their program of study requires otherwise.

How to Apply

1. **Make an appointment with Luiza Cliver, Asst. Director of International Student Programs, in the Intercultural Office.** This appointment will review your eligibility for CPT and outline the steps in the process. Plan ahead, as this appointment should be made at least one month before the deadline for CPT. **This appointment is required before any further steps in the process.**

- a. You must bring the CPT Student Request Form to this appointment.
- 2. Receive an offer for a position.** The Career and Professional Development Center can assist with this, if you would like guidance, but they do not assign placements.
 - a. When you have an offer letter from an Employer, review it to ensure that it has the following 7 components in writing from your employer:
 - (1) job title
 - (2) job description
 - (3) salary
 - (4) number of hours you will work per week
 - (5) start date
 - (6) end date
 - (7) the specific work location (the address where YOU will work).
 - b. If you do not have all of the details listed above, please show this to your employer and request these details be added, as you will not be authorized for CPT until all 7 components are confirmed in writing by the employer.
- 3. Make an appointment with your academic advisor.** Take your job offer letter and the CPT F-1 Student Request form (signed by the Asst. Director) to your academic advisor and ask your advisor to complete Section II of the F-1 Student Request for CPT.
- 4. Make an appointment with Joy Fea (fea@messiah.edu) and ask her to complete Section III of the F-1 Student Request for CPT.**
 - a. Register for an internship course with Joy Fea (fea@messiah.edu) in the Career and Professional Development Center for the semester (if you do not have a required Practicum/internship in your major requirements).
 - b. The Career and Professional Development Center will notify you if approved. (Please note: this approval process can take up to one week.)
 - c. After the Career and Professional Development Center has emailed you with approval, you should register for the Internship course through McSquare.
- 5. Bring your complete application (offer letter, completed F-1 Student Request for CPT form, and a copy of your registration for internship) to the Intercultural Office, Monday-Friday, between 8 a.m.-4 p.m.**
 - a. International Student Programs will review your application and notify you by email within 5 business days of a decision; if approved, you will receive a new I-20 document which needs to be signed by you and the DSO.

CPT Regulations

- CPT is approved on a full-time basis (<40 hours a week, **only** during summer or J-term) or a part-time basis (<20 hours a week, possible during fall and spring, as well as summer and J-term).
 - CPT is approved on a part time (<20 hours a week) basis during the fall and spring semesters, unless an internship or practicum required by the student's program of study mandates experience beyond 20 hours a week.
 - International students at Messiah College are limited to a combined total of 20 hours per week of employment during the academic year (inclusive of on-campus employment and any CPT).
- Time spent doing CPT is not subtracted from the 12-month maximum period of OPT (Optional Practical Training), but students who engage in a cumulative 12 months or more of full-time CPT are ineligible for any OPT after completing their Bachelor's degree.
- Students who engage in off-campus employment without obtaining CPT authorization will be considered to have engaged in unlawful employment, which is grounds for the termination of an F-1 visa.
 - This includes working before or after the approved dates on the CPT authorization as listed on the Form I-20.
 - Or, if you are employed differently than defined by the CPT authorization on page two of the I-20.
- In order to accept salary or wage payment from a U.S.-based source, it is necessary to obtain a Social Security Number.
- CPT is authorized on a semester basis. Each semester of CPT requires a new complete application, even if the employer remains the same.
 - Students approved for full-time CPT in the fall or spring semester (because of specified program requirements) must maintain full-time enrollment at Messiah College.
- Students may not engage in CPT after completion of their undergraduate program.
- Start date/End date
 - Summer semester:
 - Earliest start date: Day after spring 'Graduation'
 - Latest end date: Day before 'First Day of Classes' in the fall semester
 - Spring semester:
 - Earliest start date: Day after fall 'Graduation'
 - Latest end date: Day before 'First Day of Classes' in the summer session
 - Fall semester:
 - Earliest start date: Day after 2nd summer semester 'Final Examinations' end
 - Latest end date: Day before 'First Day of Classes' in the spring semester